

REMARKS

The above preliminary amendment is made to remove multiple dependencies from claims 5, 6, 8, 9 and 12-14.

Applicants respectfully request that the preliminary amendment described herein be entered into the record prior to calculation of the filing fee and prior to examination and consideration of the above-identified application.

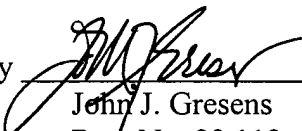
If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues concerning this communication, please contact Applicants' primary attorney-of record, John J. Gresens (Reg. No. 33,112), at (612)371.5265.

Respectfully submitted,

MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.  
P.O. Box 2903  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-0903  
(612) 332-5300



Dated: February 4, 2004

By   
John J. Gresens  
Reg. No. 33,112

JJG:mmm